

Ladies and Gentlemen: It gives me great pleasure to stand before you today and deliver the State of the City Address.

### **The Teams**

Let me begin by introducing the teams that are leading your city. First we have your elected officials.

Ann Lilly represents much of the Westside neighborhoods

Susannah Byrd the North Central neighborhoods

Alex Lozano the East Central neighborhoods

Melina Castro the Northeast neighborhoods

Presi Ortega the Eastside neighborhoods

Eddie Holguin the Mission Valley neighborhoods

Steve Ortega the East ridge/Mid-valley neighborhoods

Beto O'Rourke the Southwest neighborhoods

You have bright, progressive minds that have brought new ideas, new energy, and new leadership to the 22nd largest city in the United States. Council's role is to provide the vision, articulate the mission, and establish goals for the city.

## **City Staff**

Complimenting the elected officials we have 6,200 public servants led by our very competent City Manager, Ms. Joyce Wilson and her executive team of professionals. I have had the privilege of working closely with them and can tell you that your city is in good, capable, dedicated hands.

- Our focus is on results
- Our sights are set on our potential
- Our only limitation is our own vision of the future

A testament to the caliber of our capability is the fact that Ms. Wilson worked with every city department and the council to adopt the City's first balanced budget in a decade, streamline city government, and improve efficiency and customer service. We are giving the taxpayers results .... Not excuses.

## **The Summit**

In a community struggling to achieve its dreams, perhaps no public function is more strategic than that of economic development. Yet, for the past half-century, El Paso has achieved a condition of growth without prosperity.

A strategy based on industries with low added value has perpetuated our decline in economic status, from what was once one of the wealthiest cities in the Southwest.

This mayor and council have set a vision to regain our once proud status and we have an administration and strategic partnerships that can and will take us to victory!

Within the first 100 days of our administration we held a regional economic summit attended by key players from our city and our neighbors in Southern New Mexico and Northern Mexico. The summit's end marked the commencement of our journey to new economic prosperity and the establishment of six advisory cabinets and Lyceum.

The Lyceum has amassed almost 100 volunteers who are dedicated to bringing about economic prosperity. They are bringing forth a new set of economic growth strategies that may seem somewhat radical or revolutionary, but are common among communities that are successful. We understand the need to focus on strategies for wealth creation, providing higher wage jobs, and cultivating an environment where new, fast-growing innovation-oriented

companies can be created, nurtured through rapid growth and spin-out additional companies like themselves.

The City government has valuable partners that are committed to working with us to achieve our ambitious goals. These partners include all of the Chambers of Commerce, the El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation, the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Corporation, and the Desarrollo Economico de Juarez (Economic Development of Juarez) initiative in our sister city.

In a relatively short period of time, the cabinets of the Lyceum have begun making solid recommendations to the council.

## **Manufacturing**

**We live in the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest manufacturing region in North America. Only Chicago and Los Angeles have more capacity.**

- Recruiting Video,
- establish a position in Economic Development to support the Maquiladora industry,
- They are working on a regional strategy planning process for manufacturing

## **Medical**

**Years ago the community began working on the Medical Center of the Americas. The Medical cabinet is focusing on taking the MCA from a concept to a reality.**

- Develop educational opportunities,
- Provide accessibility to healthcare services,
- Build a research and technology park on border and Hispanic related illnesses,
- establish city-wide policy objectives which we can take to Austin and Washington

## **Military**

**The expansion of Fort Bliss provides us with opportunities and challenges. The military cabinet is working closely with Ft. Bliss leadership to assure that we are prepared for the phenomenal expansion not only in the number of troops, but for the military missions, such as Future Combat Systems that are coming to the fort.**

- Approve additional debt/bond capacity for building of schools and other infrastructure and prioritize and coordinate infrastructure needs related to military growth

- Community initiatives should be expanded and otherwise enhanced
- Increase bond and finance capacity for local contractors will be needed to respond to expanded and diverse construction needs for the base
- Align community infrastructure and public policy in support of private sector opportunities

### **Next Generation Economy**

**I call this our visionary cabinet. The technologies of the future are being developed today. El Paso needs to be a part of that development.**

- Integrate with New Mexico's Technology Research Corridor (TRC)
- Pursue companies related to the DoD Future Combat Systems (FCS) Initiative
- Science and Technology Industrial/Commercial Parks in partnership with academic institutions

### **Tourism (Quality of Life)**

**There's nothing to do in El Paso. You've all heard that before. The tourism cabinet is determined to make that comment passé.**

- 10 ten best regional tourism venues
- Theme Park
- Incorporate PDN plan for rehabilitation of Downtown

### **Transportation**

**We need to accelerate the development of our transportation infrastructure. Congestion on I-10 will continue to worsen. I tasked the Transportation cabinet with identifying critical solutions and innovative funding tools.**

Regional Mobility Authority Plan

The Lyceum is exploring additional economic development disciplines that could provide guidance to the mayor and council. Recently they recommended the creation of a Resource Development Cabinet that would bring together grant writers and researchers who will offer their time and talent of develop the resources needed to implement the suggestions of the other cabinets.

One of request I have had coming out of the Summit and up to recently was whether there would be some sort of coordination of education and workforce development. So in future I am hoping to add one last cabinet tentatively named the Education/Workforce Development cabinet. This could create a collaborative environment with the area school districts, universities, colleges, technical training centers that would enhance economic development opportunities

### **Strategic Goals - Vision for El Paso**

I previously mentioned the two teams you have working for you; your elected body and the management team.

Early in our tenure the council engaged in a goal setting workshop to define our vision for the future of El Paso. We laid out our mission statement, established ambitious goals and passed the ball to Ms. Wilson and her management team.

Complacency is a word which does not exist in our dictionary.

None of us are willing to accept the status quo.

**Let me cover the goals council established as the roadmap to our future.**



## **Strategic Goals**

### **Fiscal Policy – To ensure long-term financial stability and sustainability of the City Government**

- Maintain or improve the City's credit rating
- Establish identifiable revenue sources to ensure stability of core services
- Ensure adequate expenditure controls are in place

### **Economic Development – To become the city with the lowest unemployment rate and highest per capita wages in the United States**

- Implement an “image marketing and public relations campaign that promotes El Paso's livability and internationalism
- Support business, job development, growth in core economic clusters, international business opportunities and collaborations/partnerships between all stakeholders and the community
- Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses

- Create and develop “products” or additional initiatives to support and facilitate economic growth

### **Transportation – To establish a comprehensive transportation system**

- Become the lowest car dependent city in the Southwest
- Mitigate traffic congestion
- Establish El Paso as an international transportation hub
- Establish El Paso as the premier just-in-time (JIT) international commerce port in the United States

### **Community Development – To become the most livable city in the United States and be recognized as an International City.**

- Identify the top ten livability factors/criteria most relevant to El Paso and establish benchmarks and comparisons
- Promote sustainable quality development
- Implement a Citywide Neighborhood program to systematically preserve and renew El Paso’s neighborhoods  
live and visit here

**Customer Service – To become a high performing, customer-focused organization**

- Develop core service and customer service delivery standards & establishing performance measures that determine quality and effectiveness
- Develop a customer service mission statement that embraces the core values of the City: Excellence, Integrity, Respect and Accountability
- Implement a customer service element to our pre-employment selection process,
- Redesign new employee orientation to spotlight customer service as our reason for being
- Substantially expand ongoing customer services training

**Citizen Involvement – To facilitate opportunities for citizens to be involved in local government**

- Create effective neighborhood associations throughout the City
- Establish a neighborhood leadership academy

## **Annual Report**

I'll be touching on some specific capital improvements in a few moments. A detailed report of our accomplishments can be found in the Annual Report that we have provided at your tables.

## **Capital Improvement Program**

Much of the harvest this administration is realizing is based on the seeds planted by previous administrations. I wish to publicly acknowledge them.

- 2000 - \$141 million Quality of Life Bonds to enhance our parks, libraries, zoo, and museums.
- 2001 - \$100 million in Certificates of Obligation to address shortcomings in our public infrastructure
- 2004 - \$110 million in General Obligation Bonds to address infrastructure and quality of life

The Plaza Theater will stand as a symbol of our “can do” attitude and provide encouragement for future projects the community decides to tackle. This project is probably the best example of public/private partnerships this community has ever seen.

## **Regional Partnerships**

We have continued to strengthen ties with our Sister City, Ciudad Juarez and our Sister State, Chihuahua. I have become good friends with Governor Baeza, Mayor Murguia, Consul General Juan Carlos Foncerrada and Consul General Donna Blair. These relationships will prove beneficial to the Borderplex as we work on cultural, economic, and social issues that impact both sides of the border that joins us together as one community.

*Regional Relationships slide*

### **Regional Relationships**

Likewise we have fostered a great working relationship with General Lennox, Col. Burns, Col Marquet and our other partners on Ft. Bliss. This has been especially important as we collaborate with the post on integrating 20,000 new soldiers and 25,000 family members into our community.

I meet quarterly with the rural mayors in El Paso County and Dona Ana, New Mexico to discuss common issues ranging from economic development to transportation, and the environment.

Communication is the key to success and I can tell you that Regional Intergovernmental Communication has never been better.

### **Initiative: Spirit 54**

*Our real competition is with other International Trade Routes ...  
not with our own regional partners.*

- Takes us back to the roots of our City
- Camino Real trade route
- What Spirit 54 will do**
  - Connection from Wichita, Kansas to the Bridge of the Americas
  - Essential to our economic future
  - Allows El Paso region to contend within a competitive international business climate

### **Initiative: Ports to Plains**

- Focusing only on the Maquila Industry's impact to the region does not ensure long-term economic sustainability.*
- With the Mexican States of Chihuahua and Sonora, explore the possibility of directing commerce from the Port of Guaymas through the Juarez/El Paso area to Plains States.
- Again this will allow the El Paso region to contend at competitive international business level.

## **Accessibility, Accountability, and Focus on Community**

### **Meet the Mayor Days**

This administration is committed to a government that is not only transparent, but accessible and accountable. To that end, I dedicate one day out of each month to invite constituents to visit their city hall and meet with their mayor.

### **Feeding the Homeless**

Behind every successful man there stands a good woman. Your first lady, Tram, not only stands behind me, but walks with me. When I challenged her to adopt a 1<sup>st</sup> Lady Project for our administration, without hesitation she suggested we feed the homeless. For the past ten months council members and city staff have joined her as Tram has visited one homeless shelter after another and provided a home cooked meal for those who are less fortunate. Generous private sector donors have stepped up to the proverbial plate to fund this humanitarian effort.

### **Thanksgiving**

Seeing the look gratitude on the faces of the homeless, Tram decided that we should show our appreciation for all we have by

feeding as many homeless and needy as possible in a splendid environment. In a tradition that is sure to survive, the faith-based community, the not-for-profit community, corporate El Paso, the folks who operate our Convention Center and more than 1,000 volunteers provided 5,000 needy people with a complete holiday dinner on Thanksgiving.

El Pasoans know it is better to give than to receive.

### **Disaster Relief Efforts**

During the first months of this administration our finest hour began with a call from the governor's office when he asked if we could open our doors to evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. Within hours the entire community rallied to the call. We prepared this very convention center to accommodate those who took refuge from the destruction. From the soldiers at Ft. Bliss, to medical and healthcare professionals, to educators, to just plain ole folks, we came to welcome and offer help. More than 2,500 volunteers helped to throw out the red carpet and open the doors to hearts and our city. We left an impression on those fleeing the New Orleans disaster that is certain to last a life time.

Our humanitarian efforts speak volumes about who and what we are.



Joining me today, in this same facility that served as their shelter a few months ago, are three special people who want to tell you something in the universal ... music.

Introduce Fred Brooks, Lionel Johnson, and Tommy Taylor  
(Katrina Evacuees)

Sitting on the west edge of Texas  
By the Rio Grande River and the Mexican Border  
And Surrounded by Rocky Mountains  
By the desert plains and New Mexico  
Is that beautiful and sunny city  
They call El Paso

She's made of stone  
And has a heart of gold  
A place to call home  
To your spirit and soul

The people of the city .... El Paso  
Are full with charity and hospitality  
They give gifts of hope, faith and love  
Accented with fresh air and cleanliness  
In this beautiful and sunny city  
They call El Paso.

## **Final Thoughts**

In closing, I want to leave you with some final thoughts. We must look at the expansion of Fort Bliss, Future Combat Systems, the Four Year Medical School and the Medical Center of the Americas should not be viewed as trophies to sit back and admire. These opportunities are more like hunting licenses which will allow us to pursue our own destiny.